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SUBJECT: JULY 11 PLC MEETING FAILS TO REACH A QUORUM

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) did not reach a quorum for the July 11 meeting called by PA President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), because of a boycott by HAMAS legislators. Contacts in Abbas' office say he is considering next steps. End Summary.

PLC FAILS TO REACH A QUORUM

¶2. (C) Forty-one Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) deputies attended the July 11 PLC meeting, called by Abu Mazen in a July 5 decree, falling short of the required 67 deputies for a quorum. HAMAS deputies boycotted the meeting, and HAMAS Executive Force (EF) members prevented four Fatah deputies from entering the Gaza PLC building to attend the session via videoconference. According to Fatah PLC Bloc leader Azzam al-Ahmad, HAMAS boycotted the meeting because it would not have had a voting majority, since 41 HAMAS legislators are in Israeli prisons. Without a quorum, the PLC was unable to convene a new session that would have begun with the election of a new speaker and deputies. It also was not able to consider Abbas's presidential decrees issued during the emergency period, including the decree that allowed PM Fayyad's government to assume power without PLC approval.

SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE NEW GOVERNMENT

¶3. (C) Presidency Chief of Staff Rafiq al-Husseini told PolChief that Abbas' focus is on enhancing the political legitimacy of PM Fayyad's government and that he does not believe most Palestinians are concerned about the legal issues at play. He indicated that Abu Mazen is considering next steps that will keep PM Fayyad's government in place, consistent with the Basic Law.

WALLES